THE THRESHOLD
OF
PRIVATE DEVOTION.

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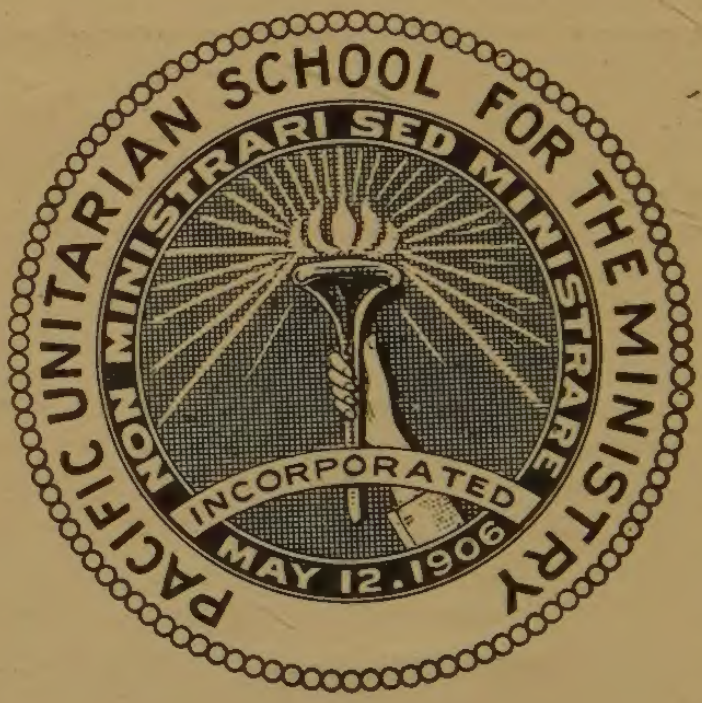

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THE THRESHOLD

OF

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

"*As certain as piety, virtue, and eternal happiness are of the most concern to man, as certain as the immortality of our nature, and relation to God are the most glorious circumstances of our nature, so certain is it, that he who dwells most in contemplation of them, whose heart is most affected with them, who sees farthest into them, who best comprehends the value and excellency of them, who judges all worldly attainments to be mere bubbles and shadows in comparison of them, proves himself to have the finest understanding, and the strongest judgment.*"—LAW.

THE THRESHOLD

OF

Private Devotion.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE contents of the present work, intended to aid the Christian in his private meditations, are arranged under separate heads for greater convenience, but no attempt has been made to supply a system of religious instruction.

May, 1862.

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INTRODUCTION.

Upon the first view of the teaching of our blessed Lord, the unbelieving heart of man is ready to exclaim, with His disciples, "Who then can be saved?" and to turn away from our Saviour's command to take up the cross daily, and follow His steps with undeviating strictness, as a hopeless task in the present state of the world. Human nature in its fallen condition is startled at the apparent severity and impracticable aspect of some of the most emphatic declarations of our Lord upon the extent of the sacrifices required by those who should desire to "enter into life," and finds it hard to reconcile them with the mercy and goodness of God displayed in the visible creation, and attested by the experience of mankind in the past ages of the world.

The reply of our blessed Lord to this desponding exclamation of His disciples appears to be the first step towards the removal of this perplexity: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." The humble

Christian, leaning upon this gracious assurance, will take courage, and use his best endeavours to reconcile these fearful declarations with the present scene of imperfection and moral confusion, and with his own weakness and sinfulness. When tempted to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" he will apply to himself the consolatory answer of the holy Apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me!" He will remember the encouraging assurance of our blessed Lord to the same great Apostle: "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and again, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." He will reflect upon the unspeakable importance of the issue at stake; he will gain further strength for the great conflict which he is waging with the world, the flesh, and the devil, by the recollection of the victories achieved with the sword of the Spirit upon the same spiritual battle-field by "the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs," and by the long array of the faithful members of "the Holy Church throughout the world," who have since been gathered to their rest, and in whose society he may hope, through the merits and death of our blessed Redeemer, to enjoy eternal happiness in the glorious presence of God.

Upon further consideration of the practical duties of Christianity it will be found, that, while the clearest distinction is drawn between holiness and wickedness, and the slightest deviation from the eternal rules of truth and justice is

condemned, even in the most trifling transactions, and while the utmost liberality, kindness, and consideration are required from us in all our dealings with our fellow-men, nothing which would promote our real happiness, even in this world, is ordinarily withheld from us. In the eloquent words of Bishop Porteus, Christianity "forbids no necessary occupations, no reasonable indulgences, no innocent relaxations. It allows us the use of the world, provided we abuse it not. It requires that our liberty degenerate not into licentiousness, our amusements into dissipation, our industry into incessant toil, our carefulness into extreme anxiety and endless solicitude."

The sincere Christian who is endowed with wealth, whilst enjoying with thankfulness and moderation the blessings of Providence which surround him, is warned by the fearful parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus against that excessive and selfish indulgence which might lead him to neglect the alleviation of that poverty and misery which the sinful condition of the world constantly produces, and against that forgetfulness of his eternal inheritance which is one of the leading temptations of a state of worldly prosperity.

The faithful Christian of middle or lower rank will follow his appointed occupation with diligence, sobriety, and prudence, but without anxiety or covetousness, in the full trust in the promise of our blessed Saviour, that if he "seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," "all other things," as far as they may

conduce to his eternal and temporal welfare, "shall be added unto him."

All true Christians, like "good soldiers of Jesus Christ," will be ready, when called upon, to take any post of duty to which extraordinary circumstances, either in their private or public life, may summon them in connexion with their Christian profession; knowing "that He is faithful that promised," and that, if they bear manfully the cross, thus providentially laid upon them, they will gain the martyr's crown. In the present state of society in our highly-favoured land, where the blessings of the Gospel of Christ are so abundantly shed abroad, and its heavenly doctrines are so generally taught, and, through Divine grace, not seldom exhibited in Christian conduct in the purest state compatible with the imperfection of our fallen nature, happily no opportunity is likely to arise for the exercise of Christian heroism in its more striking forms, as displayed in the sufferings and death of the early witnesses to the Christian faith. A careful examination of human life will, however, convince us that the warning of our blessed Lord to His disciples is in some measure applicable to His faithful followers, even in the most advanced religious condition hitherto reached by any extensive community: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." For, besides "the numerous ills that flesh is heir to" in this imperfect scene, the casualties of life and the sufferings arising from the misconduct of others, the sincere Christian, as he advances in tenderness of conscience, and in the scrupulous

performance of every social duty, must be prepared to suffer frequent vexation and mortification from the opposition, the ridicule, and the uncharitable censures of those too numerous members of every circle whose indifference to vital religion is tacitly rebuked by his own stricter rule of life. He will on these occasions thankfully accept the gracious assurance with which our Saviour accompanies the warning: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Variety in individual character and in the circumstances of daily life nearly precludes the recommendation of rules for general adoption respecting the details of private devotional practice. As, however, some persons may possibly derive benefit from suggestions which have been found useful, a few are subjoined to these general remarks:—

1. When in the hours of solitude our spirit is bowed down from the loss of relations or friends, or when we are assailed by evil thoughts, it may be found salutary to read or repeat from memory some of the collects which are inserted in the following pages, and adapted for private use, or to use any other more congenial form of devotion. This practice will divert the mind from the evils and temptations which oppress it, raising the soul in silent prayer to God, who "seeth in secret," and who "is about our path, and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways." It will tend, by the Divine blessing, to calm and purify the soul. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted!"

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God!"

2. When we privately set apart some suitable period for religious abstinence or self-denial, such as the weekly commemoration of our Lord's death, a form of self-examination upon some particular Christian grace, practised from memory, during our intervals of leisure, may be found useful in improving our character and assisting us in our progress towards Christian perfection. The following example, founded upon the clauses of St. Paul's description of Christian charity, may assist to increase in us that spirit of universal love and goodwill to men which is beautifully described as "the very bond of peace and of all virtues."

After reading or repeating from memory this description of Charity, we may take the clauses separately, thus:—

"*Charity suffereth long.*"

Do I suffer long when my relations (recalling them to the mind in detail), my dependants, my servants, or others, vex, offend, irritate, or annoy me?

"*And is kind.*"

Am I kind to my relations (recalling them to mind severally), my dependants, my servants, my friends, and my neighbours?

"*Charity envieth not.*"

Do I strive to banish all envious feelings which I may be tempted to indulge in towards others who are better, or richer, or superior, or more fortunate in any respect than myself?

"*Charity vaunteth not itself.*"

Do I repress all personal boasting, vanity, and conceit?

"*Is not puffed up.*"

Do I check all feelings of pride, and endeavour to humble myself, as a sinful and imperfect creature in the sight of my heavenly Father?

"*Doth not behave itself unseemly.*"

Do I avoid all careless indifference to the peace and welfare of those around me?

"*Seeketh not her own.*"

Do I carefully shun taking advantage of the ignorance of my neighbour in my worldly transactions with him?

"*Is not easily provoked.*"

Do I try to make allowance for the frailty of others when they give me cause for just anger?

"*Thinketh no evil.*"

Do I avoid all uncharitable suspicions of others?

"*Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.*"

Do I lament the sin and evil in the world, and countenance and encourage every good and righteous action among men?

"*Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.*"

Do I place the most charitable construction upon the conduct of others?

"*Endureth all things.*"

Do I bear injuries, reproaches, or affronts with reasonable patience and meekness?

3. As our literature happily abounds with books of private devotion suited to the varied taste and feelings of individual Christians, no extended list of these excellent manuals need be given here. A

very few are mentioned as suited for constant use:

The Private Devotions of Bishop Andrewes, translated by Dean Stanhope.

The Sacra Privata; or Private Devotions of Bishop Wilson (of Sodor and Man).

The Christian Year; a Series of Sacred Poems.

Law's Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying, edited by Archdeacon Hale.

Marriott's Hints on Private Devotion.

Sherlock's Discourse on Death.

PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS.

I.

FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

INTRODUCTORY.

O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive my humble petitions; and though I be tied and bound with the chain of my sins, yet let the pitifulness of Thy great mercy loose me: for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

CONFESSION.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is

past; and grant that I may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONFESSION AND PRAYER.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness: according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine offences.

Wash me throughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified in Thy saying, and clear when Thou art judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

But lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.

Turn Thy face from my sins, and put out all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence: and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of Thy help again: and stablish me with Thy free Spirit.

Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou that art the God of my health: and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth shall show Thy praise.

For Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee: but Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

FOR PARDON.

I humbly beseech Thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon mine infirmities; and for the glory of Thy name turn from me all those evils that I most righteously have deserved; and grant, that in all my troubles I may put my whole trust and confidence in Thy mercy, and evermore serve Thee in holiness and pureness of living, to Thy honour and glory; through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR PURITY OF THOUGHT.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are

hid: cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name; through Christ our Lord.

FOR HEAVENLY DESIRES.

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto me, that I may love the thing which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, my heart may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR GENERAL GUIDANCE.

O Lord, I beseech Thee mercifully to receive the prayers of Thy servant, which calleth upon Thee; and grant that I may both perceive and know what things I ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR PROTECTION.

Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep me both outwardly in my body, and inwardly in my soul; that I may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul: through Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR CHARITY.

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send Thy

Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee: grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake.

FOR GUIDANCE IN ESPECIAL CASES.

O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee; mercifully grant that Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule my heart [*especially in* ———]; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that I may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word, I may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

FOR SEASONS OF ABSTINENCE.

O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights; give me grace to use such abstinence, that, my flesh being subdued to the Spirit, I may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to Thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

II.

BISHOP ANDREWES.

May the power of the Father govern and protect me! May the wisdom of the Son teach and enlighten me! May the influence of the Holy Spirit renew and quicken me!

O Lord, I beseech Thee,

Watch over my soul;
Strengthen and sustain my body;
Exalt and refine my appetites;
Compose my passions;
Regulate my manners;
Bless my undertakings;
Fulfil my petitions;
Suggest to me holy thoughts;
Pardon what is past;
Direct me in what is present;
Prevent me in what is to come.

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end."

III.

FOR GUIDANCE.

O Lord, Thou art good and gracious, O teach me Thy statutes:

Teach me Thy way, O Lord!

O learn me true understanding and knowledge; for I have believed Thy commandments.

O let my heart be sound in Thy statutes, that I may live!

Make me to understand the way of Thy commandments, and so shall I talk of Thy wondrous works.

My soul melteth away for very heaviness; comfort Thou me according unto Thy word.

O that my way were made so direct that I might keep Thy statutes.

O let me not go wrong out of Thy commandments.

I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.

Ps. cxix.

FOR CONSOLATION.

Be merciful unto me, O God, for I will call daily upon Thee.

Comfort the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious; and of great mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.

Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and ponder the voice of my humble desires.

In the time of my trouble, I will call upon Thee, for Thou hearest me.

O turn Thou unto me, and have mercy upon me; give Thy strength unto Thy servant, and help the son of Thine handmaid.

O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day

and night before Thee; O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, incline Thine ear unto my calling. *Ps.* lxxxvi. lxxxviii.

FOR HOLINESS.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law; yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments, for therein is my desire.

Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way.

O stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee.

Take away the rebuke that I am afraid of, for Thy judgments are good.

Behold, my delight is in Thy commandments, O quicken me in Thy righteousness.

Ps. cxix. 33—40.

COMMUNION WITH GOD.

O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh also longeth after Thee, in a barren and dry land where no water is!

Thus have I looked for Thee in holiness, that I might behold Thy power and glory.

For Thy lovingkindness is better than the life itself. My lips shall praise Thee.

As long as I live I will magnify Thee in this manner, and lift up my hands in Thy Name.

My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness, when my mouth praiseth Thee with joyful lips.

Have I not remembered Thee in my bed, and thought upon Thee when I was waking?

Because Thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.

My soul hangeth upon Thee; Thy right hand upholdeth me. *Ps.* lxiii. 1—9.

IV.

A MORNING PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, I bless and praise Thy holy Name that Thou hast preserved me from all the evils and dangers of the night past, and hast safely brought me in health and strength to the beginning of another day. And now, O Lord, I beseech Thee to strengthen me by Thy blessed Spirit, that I may embrace all opportunities of serving Thee and doing good; that I may love Thee with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength; that I may become a true and faithful disciple of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and that I may love my neighbour as myself. Grant me, O Lord, such a measure of Thy grace, that I may carefully avoid all occasions of evil, particularly all sloth, sensuality, selfishness, uncharitableness, censoriousness, covetousness, pride, vanity, discontent, impatience, distrust in Thy good providence, neglect of Thy Holy Word and Commandment [ ], and

whatsoever other sins I am most likely to fall into. O enable me to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to become more humble, meek, pure, temperate, patient, more thoroughly resigned to Thy Holy Will, more thankful to Thee for Thy great goodness and mercies, more actively benevolent, kindly affectioned, and charitable towards my brethren and fellow-creatures. Grant, O Lord, that I may live in such a sober, righteous, and godly manner daily here upon earth, that when I die, I may be comforted with the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us through the merits and mediation of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully to pour Thy blessings abundantly, both spiritual and temporal, upon my dear [*wife, husband, parents, children, or brothers and sisters,*] and all my relations and friends, and this household and myself, and grant us all this day Thy protection from all sin and danger. [*Here add any particular prayer for especial blessings or aid according to your circumstances.*] I beseech Thee, O Lord, of Thy great goodness and mercy, to confirm me in health and strength and vigour of body and mind, and make me diligent in the duties of my station, and enable me to fulfil the designs which I have from time to time commenced, if it shall seem good unto Thine infinite wisdom and mercy. But, O Lord, I beseech Thee, teach me to submit with Christian patience and resignation to whatsoever adverse circumstances Thou shalt see fit to ordain. Let Thy

blessing be upon all my actions, and let Thy wisdom direct all my intentions; that so the whole course of my life may be ordered by Thy governance, to do all that is righteous in Thy sight, through Thy Son Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,

"Our Father, which art in heaven," &c.

AN EVENING PRAYER.

O blessed Lord God, I humbly thank Thee for Thy great goodness and mercy towards me, in preserving me this day from all the evils and dangers which we are liable to, and for granting me health and strength to join in its duties, and to enjoy Thy manifold goodness and mercies [*and particularly for*]. Make me more thankful to Thee for these and all Thy great goodness and mercies, and especially for the greatest of all Thy mercies, even the redemption of the world by our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I confess, O Lord, that I have hitherto been too careless about the great duties of religion, and that I have minded the business and pleasures of this short life far more than Thy holy service. I confess, also, that I have been guilty of many sins and offences against Thee, and particularly this day [ ]. But, O Lord, I beseech Thee to have mercy upon me, a sinner! Forgive me all my past sins, for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ! For His sake I beseech Thee to blot out all mine iniquities, and grant me the aid of Thy Holy Spirit that I may diligently amend my life for the time

to come, and carefully avoid all occasions of evil, particularly all sloth, sensuality, selfishness, uncharitableness, censoriousness, covetousness, pride, vanity, discontent, impatience, distrust in Thy good promises, neglect of Thy Holy Word and Commandment [ ], and whatever other sins I am most likely to fall into. Grant me the grace of the Holy Spirit, to love Thee with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength; to become a true and faithful disciple of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to love my neighbour as myself. O enable me to become more humble, meek, pure, temperate, patient, more thoroughly resigned to Thy Holy Will, more thankful to Thee for Thy great goodness and mercies, more actively benevolent, kindly affectioned, and charitable towards my brethren and fellow-creatures. Grant, O Lord, that I may live so daily here upon earth, as I should wish I had done when I come to die.

And now, O Lord, I beseech Thee to receive my dear [*parents, wife, husband, or children, or brothers and sisters, and all my dear relatives and friends,*] and our household and myself this night into Thy protection; and grant us all, I beseech Thee, refreshing rest, that we may rise in the morning fitted for Thy service and the duties of the day. I beseech Thee, O Lord, to pour Thy blessings abundantly, both spiritual and temporal, upon my dear [*wife, or husband, or child,*] and to preserve them in health and strength, and enable them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ. I beseech Thee, O Lord, to confirm me in health and strength and vigour of body and mind, and make me diligent in the duties of my station, and enable me to fulfil the designs which I have from time to time commenced, if it shall seem good unto Thine infinite wisdom and mercy. But, O Lord, I beseech Thee, teach me to submit with Christian patience and resignation to whatsoever adverse circumstances Thou shalt see fit to ordain. O Lord, I beseech Thee mercifully to hear my prayers, and grant me these imperfect petitions, together with whatsoever else Thou seest best for my spiritual and temporal welfare, for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say,

"Our Father, which art in heaven," &c.

IN TEMPTATION.

Almighty and most merciful Father, I humbly beseech Thee to look upon my infirmities, and to keep me in the hour of temptation from the commission of sin. Enable me to take up my cross daily, and to follow our blessed Lord and Saviour. Give me, I pray Thee, a clear knowledge of my duty under every circumstance of life. Show me the "narrow way" which "leadeth unto life," and grant me the aid of Thy Holy Spirit to enable me to walk therein with undeviating stedfastness and increasing faith and courage. Grant these things for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

RESIGNATION UNDER AFFLICTION.

O Heavenly Father and God of all comfort, look down at this time with Thy gracious compassion upon me, Thy sinful and unworthy servant, and enable me to bear with Christian patience and resignation this trial which Thou hast, in Thine inscrutable wisdom, brought upon me. May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, dwell within my breast, to free me from the love of this world and to create strong desires of heaven in my soul. Grant these things for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

BODILY SUFFERING.

O God of all mercy, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, look down with compassion upon [ ], and relieve [*him* or *her*, or *myself*] from this present illness, and in Thine own good time restore [*him*] to health. I humbly beseech Thee to mitigate [*his*] sufferings, and to enable [*him*] to bear whatever Thou, in Thy wisdom and mercy, mayest appoint for [*him*] with Christian patience and resignation to Thy holy will. Grant these things for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONFIRMATION OF CHILDREN.

Almighty God, I humbly beseech Thee to pour out Thy Holy Spirit in increased measure upon my child at this solemn period, when he has taken upon himself the baptismal vows in the rite of Confirmation, that he may feel the importance of this dedication of himself to Thee,

O heavenly Father; and that he may be enabled to take up his cross daily, and follow the blessed steps of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Give him a due sense of the solemn nature of the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and incline him to prepare his heart, by prayer and serious self-examination, so to approach this holy ordinance as to obtain the blessings of spiritual strength and nourishment which Thou hast graciously promised to all faithful communicants. Grant these things for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

FOR CHILDREN.

O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, look down upon my children and pardon their sins and offences against Thee. Grant them, I humbly beseech Thee, the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, to enable them to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to follow in honesty, sobriety, and godliness, the path of life which Thou hast graciously opened to them. Let Thy blessing and protection rest upon them [during their abode at a distance from their home]. Grant these things for the sake of Thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

ON THE ORDINATION OF A SON.

O Lord, I beseech Thee to grant Thy blessing and favour to my son upon his entrance into the ministry of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to pour out abundantly upon him the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, to enable him to fulfil the

duties of his sacred profession, as a preacher of righteousness, and a good soldier of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I humbly beseech Thee, O Lord, to preserve him from all erroneous doctrine, and to give him a right judgment in all things, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

A

FORM OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

Do I endeavour to love God with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength?

Am I thankful for all His daily blessings and mercies?

Have I constant sense of His overruling Providence in all things; of His omnipresence; and His great goodness and mercy towards us?

Do I put my whole trust in Him?

Have I a thankful remembrance of the death and sufferings of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Have I a lively faith in His merits and atonement for all our sins, upon our sincere repentance?

Have I constant sense of the obligation which His revelation upon earth has laid upon me and all His followers to the most strenuous and unceasing exertions after Christian perfection?

Have I a sense of my natural imperfection and great sinfulness, and of my utter inability to please God or to lead a holy life by my own unaided exertions?

Have I a grateful and comfortable belief in the operation of the Holy Spirit, which God sheds upon the hearts of all who pray to Him for this Divine assistance, as the only efficient means of stedfast continuance in well-doing?

Am I, whilst endeavouring to discharge to the best of my power every Christian duty, filled with humility, and thoroughly convinced that when I have done all, I am but an unprofitable servant, and can plead alone the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Do I feel the importance of a holy life as the necessary qualification for a participation in those merits, and for an entrance into the heavenly kingdom and presence of a God of infinite holiness?

Do I pray continually and fervently to God for grace to do His will?

Do I study the Holy Scriptures with attention and interest, with reverence and thankfulness, as the blessed revelation of Divine truth, and the source from which we derive all our knowledge of the invisible spiritual world, and of our duty as Christians?

Do I endeavour to regulate my whole conduct of will, understanding, affection, and conversation, by this Divine rule?

Am I thankful, contented, humble, meek, patient, sober, temperate, pure in thought, word, and deed, charitable, benevolent, industrious, zealous?

Do I love my neighbour as myself?

Do I aid the cause of the Gospel, and exercise Christian charity by a conscientious disposal of my worldly goods?

Am I cultivating my mental endowments or all other talents entrusted to my care, with a view to the service and glory of God?

Do I give any portion of my leisure to works of benevolence?

Am I useful to others?

Can I benefit any persons by my influence?

Do I encourage them in works of piety?

Do I console others with my sympathy?

Do I try to reconcile estranged friends'?

DAILY SELF-EXAMINATION.

The foregoing form is intended for occasional use; not to supersede that scrutiny into the thoughts, words, and actions, which the Christian should make at the close of each day.

If any one should feel this daily examination irksome at first, let him consider it as part of that "daily cross" which Jesus Christ requires His disciples "to take up;" and that he is enjoined to "strive" to enter in "at the strait" or narrow "gate;" and is warned by his Divine Master, that "many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able;" recollecting that the same blessed Saviour has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

[1] The last eight questions are from a valuable work, entitled "Thoughts on Personal Religion," by Edward Meyrick Goulburn, D.D.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES AND FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. *Mark* xii. 29, 30.

Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him up, because he hath known My name.

He shall call upon Me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and bring him to honour. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation. *Ps.* xci. 14—16.

Whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in Him. 1 *John* ii. 5.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. *Jude* 20, 21.

It is vain to hope that we can derive any comfort from God, if we never turn to Him but when the hour of trial comes. If we are strangers to our heavenly Father, to His nature, His spirit, His works, and His word, what comfort can we hope for from Him in the hour of need? Days and months and years must pass before we can enter into free communion with our fellow-man; and do we hope that we can at once have free communion with the blessed Spirit of God; that He will at once impart the joys and comforts of heaven to souls that are earthly and sensual, because they cry out to Him when they find that vain is the help of man? Blessed, indeed, be His name, the fire may at last purify, but long and grievous must be the ordeal; long must the sinner contend with his own hard and selfish heart; long strive in vain to free himself from the ignorance in which sin has bound him; long doubt and well nigh despair whether the grace of God can ever visit, or His comfort cheer, a heart so stained with sin. No! If we would be the friends of God, and have His present help in

trouble; if we would avoid the agony which despair of His grace in union with our worldly troubles must bring, we must become His friends betimes; we must labour by grace to make our souls fit temples of His Holy Spirit, and to drive away all the evil passions of a corrupt nature. His goodness and His glory must be our morning theme and our evening meditation; and daily must we strive more and more to fashion ourselves after the Divine image, to nourish all holy tempers, and to make our immortal souls our chief object, and to assist in doing God's work in the world, by promoting God's glory and winning souls to Him.

Blessed, thrice blessed, if, by so giving up ourselves to the guidance of God's Word and Spirit, we become the friends and children of God! For then, when the storms of life burst upon us, we shall have a refuge, a shelter, a home; we shall have a Friend to whom we can go, with the blessed certainty of having every trouble hushed and every tear dried. When earthly friends are scattered to their own and leave us alone, yet we shall not be alone, for He is with us. We may speak to Him as dear children, and say, "Doubtless, Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not!" "Though father and mother forsake us, Thou wilt take us up." "Thou wilt guide us with Thy counsel, and after that receive us into glory." Thou wilt lead us by the green pastures, and refresh our weary souls with the waters of comfort. In life Thou wilt be our friend, in death our hope, and our portion for ever! *Hugh James Rose.*

In every part and portion of their existence Christians feel that a Father's eye is upon them, and that His hand is dealing forth joy to them. When the heart of science is thus kindled, how joyful are her studies, how manifold, how endless! How pure, how calm the pleasures of art, addressing themselves to a chastened, reformed, and exalted sense of beauty! How precious the wisdom of age! How cheerful the sallies of youth! How blessed and holy the endearments of affection and friendship! *Ibid.*

The keeping of God's commandments is the best argument that we love Him. *Bp. Kidder.*

By entering into good life we enter into the favour and friendship of God, engaging His infinite power and wisdom for our protection, our succour, our direction and guidance; enjoying the sweet effluxes of His mercy and bounty; we therewith become friends to the holy angels and blessed saints; to all good men, being united in a holy and happy consortship of judgment, of charity, of hope, of devotion with them; we become friends to all the world, which we oblige by good wishes, by good deeds and good example; we become friends to ourselves, whom we thereby enrich and adorn with the best goods, whom we gratify and please with the choicest delights. *Dr. Isaac Barrow.*

Let us "acquaint ourselves with God, and be at peace." This is "piety and religion in the strictest sense," considered as a habit of mind; an

habitual sense of God's presence with us; being affected towards Him, as present, in the manner His superior nature requires from such a creature as man: this is to walk with God. *Bp. Butler.*

The genuine love of God includes all those mingled sentiments of fear, awe, admiration, veneration, gratitude, and love, which the contemplation of such a perfect character as that of the Deity naturally and necessarily suggests.

Ibid.

The greatest saint is he who is always thankful to God. Thankfulness is the perfection of all virtues. Therefore make a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for every thing that happens to you. Thus you turn every seeming calamity into a blessing. *Law.*

God, who is invisible, can no otherwise be shown to be the object of our love, than by our delighting to obey and imitate Him in acts of righteousness and charity and universal goodwill towards mankind, who are visible and always with us.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.

John i. 1—3.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

That all men might honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him. *John* v. 22, 23.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by Me. *John* xiv. 6.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it. *John* xiv. 13, 14.

And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. *John* ii. 1, 2.

He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and manifest Myself unto him.

John xiv. 21.

If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

——— *John* xiv. 23.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 *Cor.* xv. 22.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. *Rom.* v. 19.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. *Rom.* v. 1, 2.

It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Rom. viii. 34.

For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.

Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. *Heb.* ii. 16—18.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. *Heb.* iv. 14—16.

Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.
Heb. vii. 25.

The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead;

And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15.

THE HOLY GHOST.

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
John xiv. 16, 17.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.
John iii. 5—8.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. *Gal.* v. 22, 23.

THE DIVINE PROMISES, HEAVEN, AND THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. *Rev.* ii. 10.

To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with Me on My throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne. *Rev.* iii. 21.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. *Matt.* xix. 29.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; none of his steps shall slide. Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.

Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God. *Ps.* l. 23.

Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 *Tim.* iv. 8.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; he hath great delight in His commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.

Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness; he is merciful, loving, and righteous.

A good man is merciful, and lendeth; and will guide his words with discretion.

For he shall never be moved; and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

He will not be afraid of any evil tidings, for his heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord. *Ps.* cxii. 1—7.

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? *Rom.* viii. 32.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 *Cor.* iv. 17, 18: v. 1.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Gal. vi. 7—9.

Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him:

If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.

2 *Tim.* ii. 10, 11.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing. 2 *Tim.* iv. 6—8.

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.

Heb. xii. 22—24.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. *Rev.* xiv. 13.

As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be at the end of this world.

The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and do iniquity;

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Matt. xiii. 40—43.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.

Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from the just,

And shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. xiii. 47—50.

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory:

And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.

And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in;

Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink?

When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee?

Or when saw we Thee sick and in prison, and came unto Thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

Then shall He say also unto them on His left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.

Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?

Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not to Me.

And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

Matt. xxv. 31—46.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 *Cor.* v. 10.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. *Rev.* xx. 12.

In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. *John* xiv. 2, 3.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. *John* xvii. 20, 21.

Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. *John* xvii. 24.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. 1 *Cor.* ii. 9.

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us. *Rom.* viii. 18.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know this, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.

1 *John* iii. 2, 3.

These are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. *Rev.* vii. 14—17.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh

abomination, nor maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Rev. xxi. 22—24. 27.

There are many collateral issues and little streams of comfort which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us; such as our mutual comforts, visiting sick people, instructing the ignorant, and so becoming better instructed and fortified and comforted ourselves by being the instruments of our brother's ease and advantage; the glories of converting souls, of rescuing a sinner from hell, of a miserable man from the grave; the honour and nobleness of being a good man; the noble confidence and bravery of innocence, the ease of patience, the quiet of contentedness, the rest of peacefulness, the worthiness of forgiving others, the greatness of spirit that is in despising riches, and the sweetness of spirit that is in meekness and humility,—these are Christian graces in every sense, favours of God, and issues of His bounty and mercy. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

The highest glory that I can think of is to be a friend to God; and this I am sure to be as soon as I commence a righteous man. And shall I stand so much in my own light, O foolish creature that I am, as to refuse His friendship when I may have it on such reasonable terms, and shall need no other endearment to introduce me into His favour, but only that of righteousness? For besides the honour of being His favourites, what infinite advantage may we

expect to reap from it! For what may we not promise ourselves from the grace and favour of the great Sovereign of beings, who doth whatsoever pleases Him in both worlds, and hath the absolute disposal of all the blessings that either heaven or earth affords? Doubtless we may safely promise ourselves every thing, both from below and above, that can either do us good here, or contribute to our happiness hereafter. For, as the Psalmist tells us, that such is His love of righteousness, that He "will give both grace and glory, and that no good thing will He withhold from them that live uprightly." (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 11.) Who would not then be tempted to righteousness upon the prospect of being a favourite of God, and of the infinite glory and advantage which redounds from thence?

Dr. John Scott.

God has impressed upon the human mind an apprehension and desire of enjoyment far exceeding any thing which this world is competent to gratify; and for a wise and obvious reason, namely, because eternity, and not the contracted sphere of temporal objects, is intended to be our final destination. *Bp. Shuttleworth.*

A man who is in earnest in his endeavours after the happiness of a future state has an advantage over all the world; for he has constantly before his eyes an object of supreme importance, productive of perpetual enjoyment and activity, and of which the pursuit (which

can be said of no other pursuit) lasts him to his life's end. *Paley.*

And indeed the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's burden is so light, and His yoke so easy, that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the eternal Son of God His life-blood to obtain heaven for us upon that condition; and who then shall die again for us, to get heaven for us upon easier conditions? What would you do if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all thy lifetime with bread and water? Were not heaven a great bargain even after all this? And when God requires of us but to live soberly, justly, and godly (which very things of themselves to men are a very great felicity, and necessary to their present well-being), shall we think this to be a load, and an insufferable burden? *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

Death will deliver me from the burden of the flesh, from that by which alone I have been susceptible of pain, which has been the source of all my sorrows, the instrument of all my sins. It will deliver me from that which has weighed down all my upward aspirations, corrupted my purer joys, marred my most earnest efforts at advancement. Surely, then, death must prove joy and felicity to me! It will be to my soul as liberty to the captive, health to

the sick, happiness to the troubled in spirit. How, then, can I contemplate otherwise than with complacency an event which will then enfranchise me? *R. C. Coxe.*

The only way to cure the fear of death is to mortify all remains of love and affection for this world; to withdraw ourselves as much as may be from the conversation of it; to use it very sparingly, and with great indifference; to supply the wants of nature, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of it; to have our conversation in heaven, to meditate on the glories of that blessed place; to live in this world upon the hopes of unseen things; to accustom ourselves to the work, and to the pleasures of heaven; to praise and adore the great Maker and Redeemer of the world; to mingle ourselves with the heavenly quire, and possess our very fancies and imaginations with the glory and happiness of seeing God and the blessed Jesus, of dwelling in His immediate presence, of conversing with saints and angels. This is to live like strangers in this world, and like citizens of heaven; and then it will be as easy to us to leave this world for heaven, as it is for a traveller to leave a foreign country to return home. This is the height and perfection of Christian virtue; it is our mortifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts; it is our dying to this world, and living to God: and when we are dead to this world, the fear of leaving this world is over. For what should a man do in this world, who is dead to it? When we are alive to God, nothing can be so desirable

as to go to Him; for here we live to God only by faith and hope, but that is the proper place for this divine life where God dwells. So that, in short, a life of faith, as it is our victory over this world, so it is our victory over death too; it disarms it of all its fears and terrors; it raises our hearts so much above this world, that we are very well pleased to get rid of these bodies which keep us here, and to leave them in the grave, in the hope of a blessed resurrection.

Sherlock.

Death is not dreadful to one who has made his whole life a preparation for it.

The best preparation for the final act "to die in the Lord," is continually to "live in the Lord." *Archdeacon Williams.*

The greatness of those things that follow death makes all that goes before it sink into nothing. *Law.*

Religion tells man that there is much greater good prepared for him than eating, drinking, and dressing; that it is yet invisible, being too glorious for the apprehension of flesh and blood, but reserved for him to enter upon as soon as this short life is over; where, in a new body, formed to an angelic likeness, he will dwell in the light and glory of God to all eternity.

Ibid.

If in this fallen world, which is so soon to be

destroyed, there are so many objects to entertain and delight, so many provisions for my happiness and enjoyment, what must be the bliss of that heavenly country which will be for ever my resting-place and home! Since the Almighty has so liberally furnished the short and changeable scene of this life, what pleasures must there be at His right hand for evermore, and with what longing expectation should I look forward to the moment that will admit me to a share of them!

R. C. Coxe.

It is the Christian's duty to dwell much more on the thoughts of future blessedness than most men do. If ever the Apostle's steps began to flag, the radiant diadem before him gave new vigour to his heart, and we know how at the close of his career the vision became more vivid and entrancing: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory!" *F. W. Robertson.*

Let the thought of heaven calm you, and ennoble you, and give you cheerfulness to endure. Let us think much of future rest, deep as summer midnight, yet full of life and form as summer sunshine—the Sabbath of eternity. Let us think of that marvellous career of sublime occupation which shall belong to the spirits of just men made perfect. *Ibid.*

The state of heaven may well be called the state of life; because it is the state of the highest activity, wherein all our faculties act with unspeakable vigour, are freed from all that weight

of sin and matter that here continually clog and encumber them, and entertained with such agreeable objects, as perpetually employ and exercise them to the utmost of their strength and activity: where infinite truth and infinite goodness being always in our view and prospect, will continually draw forth our understandings, wills, and affections, in the most rapturous contemplation, fruition, and embracement of that all-glorious object in which we behold them: so that we shall not only act suitably to the genius of our rational nature, but in every act shall exert our utmost activity, and know, and love, and rejoice, and delight as much as ever we are able. Wherefore, since in that blessed state we shall be all life and spirit; since all our rational faculties shall be most incessantly and vigorously employed about the most agreeable and consentaneous objects, we being converted, as it were, into pure acts of knowledge, and love, and joy, and satisfaction: our state and condition may be very well expressed by *life*, which is a most vigorous principle of activity. So that as life is the most inestimable jewel we have, as it is the root of all our sense and pleasure, and the principle of all our activity, it most properly expresses the infinite value, pleasure, and activity of that blissful state which God has prepared to reward our obedience. *Dr. John Scott.*

God has revealed to us that heaven includes these six things:—

1. Perfect freedom from evil and misery.
2. The most intimate enjoyment of Himself.

3. The most enduring fruition of our glorified Saviour.

4. The most delightful conversation with angels and glorified saints.

5. The infinite glory and delightfulness of the place wherein all these felicities are to be enjoyed.

6. The endless duration of this most happy and blessed state. *Ibid.*

The souls of good men (in heaven) being freed from the encumbrances of flesh and blood, from the importunities of their bodily passions and appetites, and the temptations of sensuality that here continually solicit them, shall no longer be liable to those irregularities of affection that disturb the tranquillity of their minds here; and their actions and affections being always regulated by their reason, their consciences shall be no longer bestormed with the terrors and affrightments which nothing but the sense of guilt can suggest to them, but enjoy perpetual calm and serenity; and being thus freed from all evils and disquietude, both from within and from without, they shall be at perfect ease, and for ever enjoy most undisturbed repose. Oh, blessed day, when I shall take my leave of sin and misery for ever, and go to those calm and blissful regions, whence sighs, and tears, and sorrows, and pains are banished for evermore! *Ibid.*

Everlasting life includes a most delightful conversation and society with angels and glo-

rified spirits. For when we come to the "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," the Apostle tells us what our society will be; "an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." What glorious society is here; society in which there is nothing intermingled but what is heavenly and divine; it being altogether composed of the best, and wisest, and noblest beings in the world! *Ibid.*

"After death the just shall obtain that kingdom which is called Paradise, and there enjoy the beatifical vision." This is the paradise of the whole creation, the most fruitful and delightful region within all this boundless space of the world. Nor, indeed, can it be imagined to be otherwise, it being the imperial court which the great Monarch of the world has chosen for His special residence, and which He has prepared to receive and lodge the glorified human nature of His own eternal Son, and to entertain His friends and favourites for ever. For if these out-rooms of the world are so royal and magnificent, how infinitely splendid must we needs imagine the presence-chamber of the great King to be, the glory of whose presence will render it more righteous and illustrious than the united beams of ten thousand suns. And, therefore, though the Scripture has nowhere given us an exact description of this glorious place, because indeed no language can describe it; yet since

God has chosen it for the everlasting theatre of bliss and happiness, we may reasonably conclude that He has most exquisitely furnished it with all accommodations requisite for a most happy and blissful life. *Ibid.*

If I die a good man, I shall carry into eternity with me the genius and temper of a glorified spirit; and that will recommend me to the society of heaven, and render the spirits of those just men whose names I never heard of, as dear friends to me in an instant, as if they had been my ancient cronies and acquaintances. *Ibid.*

What are the pains of a moment to the pleasures of eternity? Wherefore, hold out, my faith and patience, yet a little longer, and your work will soon be at an end; and, after a few laborious week-days, you shall keep an everlasting Sabbath! *Ibid.*

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, PRAYER, FASTING, AND ALMSGIVING.

For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them. *Matt.* xiii. 17.

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. *John* v. 39.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learnt and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learnt them ;

And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness :

That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2 *Tim.* iii. 14—17.

When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. *Matt.* vi. 6.

Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you :

For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him ?

Matt. vii. 7—11.

If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth. *John* ix. 31.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. *James* v. 16.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

1 *John* iii. 22.

When thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;

That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly. *Matt.* vi. 17, 18. 1—3.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. *Matt.* vi. 19, 20.

If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me. *Matt.* xix. 21.

Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that fadeth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

For where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also. *Luke* xii. 33, 34.

When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. *Luke* xiv. 13, 14.

He who prays fervently will never sin deliberately.

Believe that the very act of asking for the performance of any promise, draws down, as with a golden chain, the blessing.

Be careful not to speak a lie in your prayers.
Bp. Jeremy Taylor.

Wait for God, and think not every hearty prayer can procure every thing from God. Those things which the saints did not obtain without many prayers, and much labour, and showers of tears, and long-protracted watchfulness and industry, do you also expect in its own time, and by its usual measures. Do valiantly, hope confidently, and wait patiently, and you shall find you will not be deceived. *Ibid.*

Prayer is the nearest approach to God in the highest enjoyment of Him that we are capable of in this life. When our hearts are full of God, sending up holy desires to the throne of grace, we are then in our highest state, we are upon the utmost heights of human greatness; we are not before kings and princes, but in the presence and audience of the Lord of all the world, and can be no higher until death is swallowed up in glory.
Law.

Regular and stated fasts formed a part of the discipline by which, during the whole period since the Christian Church has been founded, all her real sons, in every climate, nation, and language, have subdued the flesh to the spirit, and brought both body and soul into willing obedience to the law of God. They thought this discipline necessary as an expression and instrument of repentance, as a memorial of their Saviour, to "refrain their souls and keep them low," to teach them to "trust in the Lord," and to seek communion

with Him. To this system our own Church during all her happier times adhered. The value of this remedy for sin has come down to us attested by the experience and sealed by the blood of martyrs; who having learnt thus to endure hardships, like good soldiers of Christ, at last resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Shall we, untried, pronounce that to be needless for ourselves which the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs, the holy Church throughout the world found needful?

Tracts for the Times.

All fasting, for whatsoever end it be undertaken, must be done without any opinion of the necessity of the thing itself, without censuring others, with all humility, in order to the proper end; and just as a man takes physic; of which no man hath reason to be proud, and no man thinks it necessary but because he is in danger and disposition to it. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

Let not intemperance be the prologue or epilogue of your fast. *Ibid.*

Fasting from pleasant meats, rather than from all, as it would answer the ends of mortification, in not gratifying the palate, nor ministering to luxury; so it would agree with every constitution, and answer the objection, "That my health will not suffer me to fast." *Bp. Wilson.*

Mortification and humiliation of the body tend

to the refreshing and exaltation of the soul. How rarely do we see men endeavour to bring the body into such a state of purity and submission as to make it entirely subservient to the interest of the soul! How rarely is the body so managed as to favour that state of holiness and humility, that forbearing temper and heavenly-mindedness, which Christians should arrive at! *Bp. Allen.*

The distinguishing privilege, the prerogative of riches, is that they increase our power of doing good. This is their proper use. In proportion as men make this use of them they imitate Almighty God and co-operate together with Him in promoting the happiness of the world; and may expect the most favourable judgment which their case will admit of at the last day, upon the general, reputed maxim of the Gospel, that we shall then be treated ourselves as we now treat others. They have, moreover, the prayers of all good men, those of them particularly whom they have befriended; and by such exercise of charity they improve within themselves the temper of it, which is the very temper of heaven. *Bp. Butler.*

HOLY MEDITATION.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. *Matt.* v. 8.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. *Phil.* iv. 4—8.

When evil arises in your mind, turn your attention to some good object.

The man who has persuaded himself of God's abiding presence, has done life's greatest work. On one so persuaded the true sun of life has risen. *Alford.*

So long as purity of heart, delicacy of feeling, chastity of life, are found in a nation, so long that nation is great, no longer. Personal purity is the divinest thing in man or woman. It is the most sacred truth which the Church of Christ is commissioned to exhibit and proclaim.

F. W. Robertson.

Little reading and much thinking, little speaking and much hearing, frequent and short prayers and great devotion, is the best way to be wise, holy, and devout. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

Inure yourself to form a plan of proper meditation, to pursue it steadily, and with severe authority to keep the door shut against the intrusion of wandering fancy. *Dr. Blair.*

Let us consider that far more important portion of our existence which is passed in the presence only of our Maker and ourselves; in communing with our own hearts; in purifying their aspirations and correcting their infirmities; in cherishing the awful conviction of our religious responsibility; and in improving all those manifold sensations and faculties which, while they are nothing to the busy world around us, are to ourselves of the most incalculable value.

Bp. Shuttleworth.

If there be another life after the present; if the active scene of this life is to pass away as though it had never been; whilst our spiritual nature is to continue through all eternity, rising in infinite progression from strength to strength, from excellence to excellence, in proportion to the pains we shall have bestowed upon its cultivation, to the trials it shall have undergone, and to the victories it shall have achieved; then every moment of retired religious contemplation, when the still small voice of conscience speaks most forcibly, and when we commune with God as it were face to face, must assuredly be of paramount importance. Yet of these occupations the man of this world takes no account; they have no bearing upon what he lays down as his infallible rule of conduct, the immediate demands of society; and

therefore he considers them as the ravings of enthusiasm. *Ibid.*

The only remedy we can apply to an increasing indifference to the subject of religion is that calculating and systematic counteraction produced by habitual meditation and discipline. If our hearts grow sluggish, (and what human hearts will not?) we must strive to awaken them by prayer; if the world and its occupations demand a large portion of our time, we must at least regulate these occupations by the Christian standard, and interrupt their continuance by stated returns of devotion; if the warmth of our religious zeal abates as the novelty wears off, we must lodge its natural and only substitute, habit, in its room. *Ibid.*

Let him retire to his closet; let him then throw himself on his knees before his Maker, and pray that his heart may be softened; let him think much and deeply upon these conceptions of the infinitely good and holy, which will be found in every heart which will have the perseverance to look for them; let him impartially scrutinize the motives of his very best actions, and measure them against the tremendous capabilities of his immortal nature; and then let him cordially pronounce whether he does not find more moral rottenness, more of the leprosy of sin adhering to him, than he had previously the slightest conception of. *Ibid.*

It will, I think, appear, that since, in pro-

portion as we recede more and more from the distractions of this world and its passions, our conviction of the criminality of our own conduct becomes more and more aggravated, it is probable that were the carnal body in which we are enveloped entirely shaken off and our souls able to look upon their past conduct without any of those intervening media which in this world obscure the accuracy of our moral perceptions, our most comparatively trivial aberrations would strike us with a sensation of guilt of which in our present state of existence we have no conception. *Ibid.*

The society a man keeps insensibly communicates an impression to his character; "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise;" and the face of Moses shone with exceeding brightness after he had stood before the presence of God and walked with Him in the mount. So in its measure will it be with us when we accustom our imaginations to hold communion with the departed servants of God. So doing, we shall contract a purer temperament even whilst in the flesh, and prepare ourselves even in the midst of frailty for living, when the time comes, in a holier home. *J. J. Blunt.*

He who lives in the habitual contemplation of immortality, cannot be in bondage to time, or enslaved by transitory temptations.

F. W. Robertson.

Let us from time to time dwell on those who

are gone, not in sorrow, but in pious joy; not as those who once were mere partakers of our daily hopes and fears, but as co-heirs with us of that land whereof they are already partly in possession; let their memory be to us not merely a pledge of the happiness which is past, but rather of that eternal happiness which will be ours if we fail not; let our affection for them raise our hearts to their dwelling-place, and make us less fond of those earthly possessions and enjoyments which we can no longer share with them; let us strive to make ourselves ready for their company; whether we shall join them or not depends on our being more and more conformed to Christ, and on our possession of the graces of the beatitudes. If, like them, we have kept ourselves unspotted, as far as may be, from the world; or having, like some of them, stained our baptismal robe with wilful sin, have, like them, repented of our iniquity; if we have so struggled against our evil passions and temptations, as in the end to overcome them; if, like them, we have striven to be perfect even as our Father is perfect; if, like them, we have thrown ourselves at the foot of the cross, not trusting in our own righteousness to save us, but rather mourning over our many imperfections; if at last, like them, we have died in this faith and fear, then we may not doubt, but with all assurance believe, that we too shall be remembered when the Easter of the world shall have at last come, and the Lord shall make up His jewels. *W. E. Jelf.*

Nourish your soul with good works, give it

peace in solitude, get it strength in prayer, make it wise with reading, enlighten it with meditation, make it tender with love, sweeten it with humility, humble it with acts of penitence and self-denial, enliven it with psalms and hymns, comfort it with frequent reflections upon future glory. Keep it in the presence of God, and teach it to imitate those guardian angels, who though they attend on human affairs, and the lowest of mankind, yet always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven. *Law.*

HOLY ZEAL.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
Matt. v. 6.

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. *Matt.* vi. 24, 25. 32, 33.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. *Matt.* vii. 13, 14.

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.

But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

And a man's foes shall be those of his own household. *Matt.* x. 32—36.

He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

And he that taketh not his cross and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it. *Matt.* x. 37—39.

He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad. *Matt.* xii. 30.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking goodly pearls:

Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. *Matt.* xiii. 45, 46.

If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.

Matt. xvi. 24—27.

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath ten talents.

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Matt.* xxv. 28—30.

He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.

He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a

righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. *Matt.* x. 40—42.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. *Matt.* v. 10.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matt. v. 11, 12.

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. *Matt.* xxiv. 42.

Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. *Luke* x. 42.

If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. *Luke* xvi. 31.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded. *Phil.* iii. 13—15.

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. *Phil.* iii. 20, 21.

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. *James* iv. 17.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. *Heb.* xi. 5, 6.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. *Heb.* xi. 13.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so

easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. *Heb.* xii. 1, 2.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 *Cor.* x. 13.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. *James* i. 2, 3. 12.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time:

Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing

that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 1 *Pet.* v. 6—9.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. *Gal.* v. 24.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
James iv. 7.

He that hath small understanding, and feareth God, is better than one that hath much wisdom, and transgresseth the law of the Most High.
Eccles. xix. 24.

Let us then determine with cheerful hearts to sacrifice to the Lord our God our comforts and pleasures, however innocent, when He calls for them, whether for the purposes of His Church, or in His own inscrutable providence. Let us lend to Him a few short hours of present ease, and we shall receive our own with abundant usury in the day of His coming. *Newman.*

Let us take what trial we please, the world's ridicule or censure, loss of prospects, loss of admirers or friends, loss of ease, endurance of bodily pain, and recollect how easy our course has been directly we had made up our mind to submit to it. *Ibid.*

Is it not something beyond measure strange and monstrous (if we could train our hearts to possess a right judgment in all things), to profess that our treasure is not here, but in heaven, with

Him who ascended thither, and to own that we have a cross to bear after Him, who first suffered before He triumphed, and yet to set ourselves deliberately to study our own comfort as some great and sufficient end, to go much out of our way to promote it, to sacrifice any thing considerable to guard it, and to be downcast at the loss of it? Is it possible for a true son of the Church militant, while the "ark of Israel and Judah abide in tents," and the servants of his "Lord are encamped in the open fields," to "eat and drink" securely, to wrap himself in the furniture of wealth, to feed his eyes with the "pride of life," and to complete for himself the measure of this world's elegancies? *Ibid.*

All timidity, irresolution, fear of ridicule, weakness of purpose, such as the Apostles showed when they deserted Christ, and Peter especially when he denied Him, are to be numbered among the tempers of mind, which are childish, as well as sinful; which we must learn to despise as one of the first steps of being but an ordinary true believer.

To put off idle hopes of earthly good, to be sick of flattery and the world's praise, to see the emptiness of temporal greatness, and to be watchful against self-indulgence; these are but the beginnings of religion, but the preparations of heart which religious earnestness implies; without a good share of them how can a Christian move a step? How could Abraham, when called of God, have even set out from his native place, unless he had left off to think much of

this world, and cared not for its ridicule? Surely these attainments are our first manly robe, showing that childhood is gone.

To love our brethren with a degree of resolution which no obstacles can overcome, so as almost to consent to an anathema on ourselves if so be we may save those who hate us,—to labour in God's cause against hope, and in the midst of sufferings,—to learn to read the events of life as they occur by the interpretation which Scripture gives them, and that not as if the language was strange to us, but to do it promptly,—to perform all our relative daily duties most watchfully,—to check every evil thought, and so bring the whole mind into captivity to the law of Christ,—to be patient, cheerful, meek, honest, and true,—to persevere in this good work till death, making fresh and fresh advances towards perfection,—and, after all, even in the end, to confess ourselves unprofitable servants, nay, to feel ourselves corrupt and sinful creatures, who (with all our proficiency) would still be lost, unless God bestow on us His mercy through Christ,—these are some of the difficult realities of religious obedience, which we must pursue, and which the Apostles in high measure attained, and which we may well bless God's holy name if He enable us to make our own. *Ibid.*

But if there be those amongst us, and such there well may be, who, like the young ruler, "worshipping Christ," and "loved by Him," and obeying His commandments from their youth up, yet cannot but be "sorrowful" at the thought

of giving up their pleasant visions, their boyish idolatry, and their bright hopes of earthly happiness, such I bid be of good cheer, and take courage. What is it that your Saviour requires of you more than will also be exacted from you by that hard and evil master who desires your ruin? Christ bids you give up the world; but will not, at any rate, the world soon give up you? Can you keep it by being its slave? Will not he, whose creature of temptation it is, the prince of the world, take it from you, whatever he at present promises? What does the Lord require of you, but to look at all things as they really are, to account them merely as His instruments, and to believe that good is good because He wills it; that He can bless as easily by hard stone as by bread, in the desert as in the fruitful field, if we have faith in Him, who gives the true bread from heaven? Doubt not His power to bring you through any difficulties, who gives you the command to encounter them. He has shown you the way; He gave up the house of His mother Mary "to be about His Father's business," and now He but bids you take up after Him the cross which He bore for you, and "fill up what is wanting in His afflictions in your flesh." Be not afraid; it is but a pang now and then, and a struggle; a covenant with your eyes, and a fasting in the wilderness, some calm habitual watchfulness, and the hearty effort to obey, and all will be well! Be not afraid. He is most gracious, and will bring you on by little and little. He does not show you whither He is leading you; you might be frightened did you

see the whole prospect at once. Sufficient for the day is its own evil. Follow His plan; look not on anxiously; look down at your present footing, "lest it be turned out of the way:" but speculate not about the future. I can well believe that you have hopes now which you cannot give up, and even which support you in your present course. Be it so: whether they will be fulfilled or not is in His hand. He may be pleased to grant the desires of your heart: if so, thank Him for His mercy: only be sure that all will be for your highest good; and "as thy day so shall thy strength be." There is none like unto the "God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." He knows no variableness, neither shadow of turning; and when we outgrow our childhood, we but approach, however feebly, to His likeness, who has no youth nor age, who has no passions, no hopes, nor fears, but loves truth, purity, and mercy, and is supremely blessed because He is supremely holy.

Lastly, while we think of Him, let us not forget to be up and doing. Let us beware of indulging a mere barren faith and love, which dreams instead of working, and is fastidious when it should be hardy. This is only spiritual childhood in another form; for the Holy Ghost is the author of active good works, and leads to the observance of all lowly deeds of ordinary obedience as the most pleasing sacrifice to God.

Ibid.

Work, true work, done honestly and manfully for Christ, can never be a failure. Your own work, my brethren, which God has given you to do, whatever that is, let it be done truly. Leave eternity to show that it has not been in vain in the Lord. *F. W. Robertson.*

Christianity is to be considered as a trust deposited with us in behalf of others, in behalf of mankind, as well as for our own instruction. No one has a right to be called a Christian who does not do somewhat in his station towards the discharge of this trust. *Bp. Butler.*

"Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again:" not seeking their own private advantage, but should "live unto Him" by employing their lives in promoting His Gospel and kingdom.
Dr. Wells.

We must live in this world as in a holy temple of God, always worshipping Him, though not with our lips, yet with the thankfulness of our hearts, the holiness of our actions, and the pious and charitable use of all His gifts.

If you are no labourer or tradesman, if you are neither merchant nor soldier, consider yourself as placed in a state in some degree like that of good angels, who are sent into the world as ministering spirits, for the general good of mankind; to assist, protect, and minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. For the

more you are free from the common necessities of life, the more you are to imitate the higher perfection of angels.

As God has given you five talents, in your time, leisure, health, and fortune, it is your duty to turn them into five more. *Law.*

Christian progress is only possible in Christ. It is a very lofty thing to be a Christian; *for he is a man who is restoring God's likeness to his character;* and therefore the Apostle calls it a "high calling." What the world calls virtue is a name and a dream without Christ.

F. W. Robertson.

Religion lives only in the heads of some persons, while something else has possession of their hearts; and therefore they continue from year to year mere admirers and praisers of piety, without ever coming up to the reality and perfection of its precepts. This arises from the indiscreet use of lawful things. It is for want of religious exactness in the use of innocent and lawful things that religion cannot get possession of our hearts. And it is in the right and prudent management of ourselves as to these things that all the arts of holy living chiefly consist. *Law.*

It is the spirit and piety of the Apostles, and their love of God that you are to imitate, not the particular form of their life. Act under God as they did, glorify your own state with such love to God, such charity to your neighbour, such humility and self-denial as they did; and

then, though you are only teaching your own children, and St. Paul is converting whole nations, yet you are following his steps, and acting after his example. ——— *Ibid.*

"Do you complain of your want of faith?" said the devout Pascal. "Live as though you had it, and the inward principle of faith will assuredly follow." *Bp. Shuttleworth.*

The road to right feeling is right conduct. Act rightly, and you will soon come to feel rightly. "If any one will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

——— *T. K. Arnold.*

Victory over temptation is the witness of thy heavenly birth!

Every man's virtue is best seen in adversity and temptation. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

In Christian life every movement and every act is an opportunity for doing this one thing, of becoming Christlike. Every temptation to evil temper which can assail us to-day will be an opportunity to decide the question, whether we shall gain the calmness and the rest of Christ, or whether we shall be tossed by the restlessness and agitation of the world.

Infinite as are the varieties of life, so manifold are the paths to saintly character; and he who has not found out how directly or indirectly to make every thing converge towards his soul's sanctification, has as yet missed the meaning of this life. *F. W. Robertson.*

SIN.

Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. *Matt.* xviii. 7, 8.

That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. *Mark* vii. 20—23.

Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord.

Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord. *Lev.* xix. 11. 16, 17.

Selfishness and pride appear in the following ways amongst others. viz. :—

1. In the risings of anger or revenge at any contempt or ill usage.

2. In impatience at contradiction, and irritation if our self be thwarted.

3. In a longing for the praise of men, for honours or distinctions.

4. In cherishing a sense of self-importance, and using the gifts of nature or providence to feed our vanity or pride.

5. In feeling little or no interest in the concerns of others; listening to them merely from civility; and being apt to talk much of our own.

6. In relating with inward complacency the faults or injudiciousness we have discovered in another, compared with our own better judgment or conduct in the same particulars, or the good effect of our own advice.

7. In considering our own ease or pleasure in our domestic habits or arrangements, rather than making any sacrifice to those we live with.

8. In treating trifling annoyances or inconveniences as important, and suffering them to irritate our tempers.

9. In withholding money, or giving it sparingly, or spending any in self-indulgence, that might be better given to the poor or to promote the cause of the Gospel.

C. Girdlestone.

It is marvellous how largely we ourselves really influence the circumstances which surround us; how constantly we are the sole cause of

troubles or trials, for which we seek a cause in things outside. *Dr. Hannah.*

God's face is still against us for our old and now forgotten sin. *Ibid.*

We cannot work easily because it is in chains that we are working: the chains which we have woven by our numerous sins. Then, in our ignorance, we grow angry and impatient; we are vexed and disappointed at the failure of our measures. We think that Providence must be opposing itself to our success, while the true source of the evil is in ourselves. We have, perhaps, neglected prayer, and so suffered loss of help from God. If so, then be sure that our trials are but blessings in disguise. They are proofs that God is chastening us, and will bestow on us a rich and crowning gift of mercy, and our trials may be but the discipline of love. *Ibid.*

The world is full of things from which a Christian must abstain. All methods of being powerful or popular, inconsistent with our integrity; all arts of being agreeable at the expense or hazard of our innocence; all ways of encroaching on the property of others, and all immoderate desires of adding to our own; all diversions, entertainments, or acquaintance which have a tendency to hurt our morals or our piety; making common practice the rule of our conduct, without considering whether it be right or wrong; filling our time either with business or amusements, so as to leave no room for the improvement of our heart in

virtue, for the serious exercise of religion, and a principal attention to the great concerns of eternity: all this is the "friendship of the world" which is "enmity with God;" and if any man love it thus, "the love of the Father is not in him." *Abp. Secker.*

True repentance includes at least a change of mind, a turning from our sins to God, a deep sense of the evil of sin, and abhorrence of ourselves for it; a great reverence for God and for His laws, as well as a dread of His judgments, and deliberate and serious resolutions of changing our course of life, and of living for the future to God and to the purposes of His glory, never to return to our old sins, but diligently to exercise ourselves in all the duties and offices of a Christian life. *Sherlock.*

RESIGNATION.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. *Matt.* v. 4.

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. *Matt.* xi. 28—30.

In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

——— *John* xvi. 33.

Ye are of more value than many sparrows.

——— *Luke* xii. 7.

Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him in Thy law: that Thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity.

Ps. xciv. 12, 13.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.

Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

All things work together for good to them that love God. *Rom.* viii. 28.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.

1 *Pet.* iv. 12—14.

I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

I know both how to be abased, and I know

how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. *Phil.* iv. 11—13.

Fret not thyself because of the ungodly: neither be thou envious against the evil doers.

Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good: dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. *Ps.* xxxvii. 1. 3.

Be careful for nothing: but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your requests known unto God. *Phil.* iv. 6.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. *Isa.* xxvi. 3.

Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully; and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate.

For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity. *Ecclus.* ii. 4, 5.

No man is more miserable than he that hath no adversity. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

We must endeavour not to grieve at any thing, but to consider all that happens to us as for the best. I believe this to be our duty, and that we sin in not doing it. When God discloses His will to us in the events of life, it is sinful not to reconcile ourselves to it. *Pascal.*

Trials are our greatest blessings. "I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." If a person be truly religious, his conscience will speak peace to him at all times, and his hopes and expectations of future happiness will enable him to bear with courage and constancy inconveniences and disappointments under which a worldly and vicious mind would sink and despond. *Dr. Jortin.*

God sometimes thinks fit to discipline even such as He loves, such as He designs for heaven and a glorious eternity, leading them through the vale of tears to the land of promise. For by this He serves many great purposes, both of His own glory and their happiness; it being the most sure, direct, and immediate way to possess the heart of such with a deep and quick sense of the intolerable evil of sin, and God's unspeakable detestation and abhorrence of it. *Dr. South.*

To do God's work is not what He requires of us. His will is our duty, not His work. That will be done without us. *Experience of Life.*

Take up the cross which you have fashioned for yourself, and bear it in trusting patience after Christ. *Ellison.*

What Providence wills in His wisdom and

mercy can never come amiss to him for whom He wills it, however mysterious it may appear to our imperfect sight.

Could you see all that which God sees, all that happy chain of causes and motives which are to move and invite you to a right course of life, you would see something to make you like that state you are in, as fitter for you than any other.

But as you cannot see this, so it is here that your Christian faith and trust in God is to exercise itself, and render you as grateful and thankful for the happiness of your state, as if you saw every thing which contributes to it with your own eyes.

If you give yourself up to uneasiness, or complain of any thing in your state, you may, for aught you know, be so ungrateful to God as to murmur at that very thing which is to prove the cause of your salvation. Do not, therefore, please yourself with thinking how piously you would act and submit to God under a plague, or famine, or persecution, but be intent upon the perfection of the present day; and be assured that the best way of showing true zeal is to make little things the occasions of great piety.

Begin, therefore, in the smallest matters and most ordinary occasions, and accustom yourself to the daily exercise of this pious temper in the lowest occurrences of life. And when a contempt, an affront, a little injury, loss, or disappointment, or the smallest events of every day continually raise your mind to God in proper acts of resignation, then you may justly hope that you shall be

numbered among those who are resigned and thankful to God in the greatest trials and afflictions. *Law.*

Resignation to the will of God is the whole of piety: it includes in it all that is good, and is a source of the most settled quiet and composure of mind. *Bp. Butler.*

Our resignation to the will of God may be said to be perfect, when our will is lost and resolved up into His; when we rest in His will as our end, as being in itself most just, and right, and good. *Ibid.*

Religion consists in submission and resignation to the Divine will. Our condition in this world is a school of exercise for this temper; and our ignorance, the shallowness of our reason, the temptations, difficulties, afflictions, which we are exposed to, all equally contribute to make it so. *Ibid.*

Nor is there any thing that God would have us part with, but what it is better for us to be without, better for our ease, peace, and pleasure; and more for our liberty to be freed and disentangled from. *Worthington.*

Am I never to endure the cross, but have all straight and smooth before me? Were it good for me to be free from hindrances and vexations? A soldier must endure hardness, and I have been forewarned of such by my Master, who at the

same time has promised abundant help and comfort. Why, then, shall I be disquieted and cast down? *R. W. Evans.*

Trust in God gives us a most profound rest and peace of mind, delivers us from all careful and solicitous thoughts from time to come, which are often more terrible than the evils we fear; it teaches us to do our duty with the best prudence and industry we can, but to leave all events to God's disposal; to make known our requests to God, and to "cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for us." *Sherlock.*

To trust Providence is not to trust in God that He will do that particular thing for us which we desire; but to trust ourselves and all our concerns with God, to do for us in every particular case which we recommend to His care what He sees best and fittest for us in such cases. Such a general trust and affiance in God is a much more excellent virtue and does much more honour to the Divine Nature than merely to trust His promise which secures us of the event. For to trust God to choose our condition for us, to do either what we desire or what He likes better, argues such entire dependence on God, and such absolute resignation to His will, that it is impossible a creature can express greater veneration for the Divine perfections. *Ibid.*

A murmuring spirit is most prejudicial to the Christian life. It banishes the view of God's providential care for us. How can any one grow

in the love of God who regards God as threatening and afflicting him? How can he keep his mind fixed on Christ, his dear Saviour, who is ever fretting and vexing himself about trifling annoyances and slight discomforts?

If God makes you poor, believe it to be good for you. If He sends you sickness, believe you need His stripes. Out of evil good ever arises to the saints. *J. E. Phillips.*

Let us in all lowliness of mind set lightly by ourselves, let us form our temper to an implicit submission to the Divine Majesty, beget within ourselves an absolute resignation to all the methods of His providence, in His dealings with the children of men; let us in the deepest humility of our souls prostrate ourselves before Him, and join in that celestial song, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty! just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints! Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?" *Bp. Butler.*

HUMILITY.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. *Matt.* v. 3.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. *Matt.* v. 5.

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. *Matt.* xviii. 3, 4.

Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. *Matt.* xx. 26—28.

Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. *Matt.* xxiii. 10—12.

So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. *Luke* xvii. 10.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

For he that will love life, and see good days,

let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

1 *Pet.* iii. 8—12.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

1 *Pet.* v. 5.

Humility is the life and soul of piety. *Law.*

Hate and despise all human glory, for it is nothing else but human folly. It is the greatest snare and the greatest betrayer that you can possibly admit into your heart.

Love humility in all its instances, practise it in all its parts, for it is the noblest state of the soul of man; it will set your heart and affections right towards God, and fill you with every temper that is tender and affectionate towards men.

Let every day therefore be a day of humility; condescend to all the weaknesses of your fellow-creatures, cover their frailties, love their excellences, encourage their virtues, relieve their wants, rejoice in their prosperity, compassionate their distress, receive their friendship, overlook their unkindness, forgive their malice, be a servant of servants, and condescend to do the lowest offices to the lowest of mankind.

Aspire after nothing but your own purity and perfection.

The greatest trial of humility is an humble behaviour towards your equals, in age, estimate, and condition of life. Therefore be careful of all the motions of your heart towards them. Let all your behaviour towards them be governed by unfeigned love. Have no desire to put any of your equals below you, nor any anger at those who would put themselves above you. If they are proud, they are ill of a very bad distemper; let them therefore have your tender pity, and perhaps your meekness may prove an occasion of their cure. But if your humility should do them no good, it will, however, be the greatest good that you can do to yourself. *Law.*

Nor must we look upon our services (the best we are able to perform) as in themselves grateful or satisfactory: for all of them, if we mark them well, we shall find not only quite unprofitable to God, but very defective in many respects; for who can say he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, and degree, thoroughly right and good: with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earnest vigour of spirit, with that undistractedness of mind with which he should perform it? No; in all our stock we cannot pick out a sacrifice entire and unblemished, such as God requires, such as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our services need) to be commended and completed by the beloved Son's perfectly well-pleased performances; they need to be cleansed

and hallowed by passing through the hands of our most holy and undefiled High Priest: to become sweet and savoury (or to receive that ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας which St. Paul speaks of) from being offered up in His censer. In fine, as all our actions should, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's service and honour; services and sacrifices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; so they ought all to be offered up in the name of Jesus.

Dr. Isaac Barrow.

CHARITY.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. *Matt.* v. 9.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. *Matt.* vii. 12.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John xiii. 34, 35.

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. *Matt.* vii. 1, 2.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. *Matt.* v. 7.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect. *Matt.* v. 44—48.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Matt. xii. 36, 37.

Moreover if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican. *Matt.* xviii. 15—17.

Then came Peter unto Him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. *Matt.* xviii. 21, 22.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God.

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. 1 *John* iv. 7. 12.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men. *Rom.* xii. 17.

Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 1 *Pet.* iv. 9.

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 1 *Cor.* xiv. 20.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

1 *Cor.* xiii.

This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if,

when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth:

Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously:

Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 *Pet.* ii. 19—24.

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love: but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends. *Prov.* xvii. 9.

He that can rule his tongue shall live without strife; and he that hateth babbling shall have less evil.

Rehearse not unto an other that which is told unto thee, and thou shalt fare never the worse.

Whether it be of friend or foe, talk not of other men's lives; and if thou canst without offence, reveal them not. *Ecclus.* xix. 6—8.

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain. *James* i. 26.

To conquer selfishness is the sum of all mortification, and the greatest victory in this world;

and therefore it is here perfectly done by none: but it is done most where there is the greatest love to God, and to the Church, and the public good, and our neighbours. *Baxter.*

The real love of man *must* depend on practice, and therefore must begin by exercising itself on our friends around us, otherwise it will have no existence. By trying to love our relations and friends, by submitting to their wishes, though contrary to our own, by bearing with their infirmities, by overcoming their occasional waywardness by kindness, by dwelling on their excellences, and trying to copy them, thus it is that we form in our hearts that root of Christian charity, which, though small at first, may at last, like the mustard-seed, overshadow the earth.

Newman.

"He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The first step in the ascent of love rises in our own dwelling. From our very threshold it goes up to the eternal throne. A heart unloving among kindred has no love towards God's saints and angels. If we have a cold heart towards a servant or a friend, why should we wonder if we have no fervour towards God? Let us not deceive ourselves. It is very sweet and flattering to self to imagine ourselves in great works of devotion and charity; living at the foot of the cross, content with scanty fare and raiment, and the love of Christ alone; but if we are cold in our private

prayers, we should be earthly and dull in the most devout religious order; if we shrink from the sick bed of a servant, we should have no charity to turn the pallet of Christ's poor; if we cannot bear the vexation of a companion, how should we bear the contradiction of sinners? If a little pain overcomes us, how could we endure a cross? If we have no tender, cheerful, affectionate love to those with whom our daily hours are spent, how should we feel the pulse and ardour of love to the unknown and the evil, the ungrateful and repulsive? In all this we should be simply deceiving our own souls. What we are in one place we should be every where; as uncertain and fastidious, as sensitive and capricious, as full of partiality and prejudice, which are the leprosy of the heart, fretting its life away. *Manning.*

Patiently suffer that from others, which you cannot mend in them until God please to do it for thee; and remember that thou mend thyself, since thou art so willing that others should not offend in any thing. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

We can suffer nothing by the wickedness of men, but what God for wise reasons sees we should suffer. God orders these sufferings for us, without whom no man can hurt us; therefore we must not be angry with men for our sufferings, but reverence God. Whatever their personal hatred, or malice, or revenge be, we may securely despise them, for we are in the hands of God. These considerations will calm and temper our passions. *Sherlock.*

Come what may, hold fast to love. Though men should rend your heart, let them not embitter or harden it. We win by tenderness; we conquer by forgiveness. *F. W. Robertson.*

The cure of general conversation is like the reformation of the world. "It is an extraordinary talent to be able to improve conversation to the advantage of religion," says Bishop Wilson; so extraordinary, indeed, that very few have it, and those not the young. *Heygate.*

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. *Matt.* vi. 34.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. *Matt.* x. 28—31.

Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a

man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesseth. *Luke* xii. 15.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. *Matt.* x. 16.

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
1 *Cor.* x. 31.

Covetousness is a boundless, unreasonable pursuit of the principle of self-preservation.
Dr. South.

Providence rewards nothing but good sense, which follows the simple rule of adapting means to ends.

We live in the dark, and know not what is good for us; we disturb our minds with vain hopes, and with as vain fears; it becomes us to leave all to God, and to depend securely on His Providence, who overrules all things with His sovereign will: this is the only way to be easy and safe,—to choose nothing for ourselves, not to prescribe to Providence, but to do our duty, and then quietly expect what God will do. Is it possible there should be a happier temper than this, more honourable to God, or more secure for ourselves? Does any thing more become creatures? Is there any more perfect act of religion then to depend entirely on God, without hopes or fears, in a perfect resignation to His will, with a full assurance of His pro-

tection? Let us do our duty, and mind our own business, and leave God to take care of the world, and allot our portion in it. *Sherlock.*

There is no man so happy as a Christian. When he looks up to heaven, he thinks, "This is my home; the God that makes it and owns it is my Father: the angels, more glorious in nature than myself, are my attendants: mine enemies are my vassals;" yea, those things which are most terrible of all to the wicked, are most pleasant to him. When he hears God thunder above his head he thinks, "This is the voice of my Father;" when he remembers the tribunal of the last judgment, he thinks, "It is my Saviour that sits in it;" when death, he esteems it but the Angel set before paradise, which with only one blow admits him to eternal joy; and, which is most of all, nothing in earth or hell can make him miserable. There is nothing in this world worth envying but a Christian. *Bp. Hall.*

The common benefits of our nature entirely escape us. Yet these are the great things. These constitute what most properly ought to be accounted blessings of Providence, what alone, if we might so speak, are worthy of its care. Nightly rest, and daily bread, the ordinary use of our limbs, and senses, and understandings, are gifts which admit of no comparison with any other. Yet because almost every man we meet with possesses these, we leave them out of our enumeration. They raise no sentiment, they awaken no gratitude. *Paley.*

Rich and multiplied are the springs of innocent relaxation. The Christian relaxes in the temperate use of all the gifts of Providence. Imagination, and taste, and genius, and the beauties of creation, and the works of art lie open to him. He relaxes in the feast of reason, in the sweets of friendship, in the endearments of love, in the exercise of hope, of joy, of gratitude, of universal good-will, of all the benevolent and generous affections, which by the gracious ordination of our Creator, while they disinterestedly intend only happiness to others, are most surely productive to ourselves of complacency and peace!

Little do they know of the true measure of enjoyment who can compare these delightful complacencies with the frivolous pleasures of dissipation, or the coarse gratifications of sensuality.

Piety requires us to renounce no ways of life where we can act reasonably, and offer what we do to the glory of God. All ways of life, all satisfactions and enjoyments that are within these bounds are no way denied us by the strictest rules of piety. Whatever you can do or enjoy, as in the presence of God, as His servant, as His rational creature that has received reason and knowledge from Him; all that you can perform conformably to a rational nature, and the will of God, all this is allowed by the laws of piety. And will you think that your life will be uncomfortable, unless you may displease God, be a fool and mad, and act contrary

to that reason and wisdom which He has implanted in you? *Law.*

Where shall we find that wise and happy man who has not been eagerly pursuing different appearances of happiness, sometimes thinking it was here, sometimes there? And if people were to divide their lives into particular stages, and ask themselves what they were pursuing, or what they had chiefly in view when they were twenty years old, what at twenty-five, what at thirty, what at forty, what at fifty, and so on, till they were brought to their last bed, numbers of people would find that they had liked, and disliked, and pursued as many different appearances of happiness as are to be seen in the life of Flatus. *Ibid.*

The providence of God has so ordered the course of things, that there is no action, the usefulness of which has made it the matter of duty, and of a profession, but a man may bear the continual pursuit of it without loathing or satiety. The same shop or trade that employs a man in his youth, employs him also in his age. Every morning he rises fresh to his hammer and his anvil; he passes the day singing: custom has naturalized his labour to him; his shop is his element, and he cannot with any enjoyment of himself live out of it. Whereas no custom can make the painfulness of a debauch easy or pleasing to a man; since nothing can be pleasant which is unnatural. But now, if God has interwoven such pleasure with the works of our

ordinary calling, how much superior and refined must that be that arises from the survey of a well-governed life? Surely as much as Christianity is nobler than a trade. *Dr. South.*

Just in proportion to the improvement of those faculties with which heaven has entrusted us our beings are ennobled, and our happiness heightened. The enjoyments of mere animal existence are flat and low. The comforts of plain ordinary life, in those who have some feeling of the connexion of society, but no idea of any thing higher, rise in the next degree. The pleasures of an improved imagination take in a circle vastly wider and more fair. The joys of a benevolent heart, animated by an active and diligent spirit, refined sentiment, and affections justly warm, exceed the most gay imagination. The strong sense and genuine love of truth and goodness, with all those noblest dispositions that fill a mind affected and penetrated with a sense of religion, and practising every part of Christian duty, ascend still higher, and raise humanity to that point from which it begins to claim a nearer alliance with superior natures. *Talbot.*

Regret not that you must labour and toil. Be thankful that you are obliged by Providence to exercise and improve those various faculties and powers of mind and body which might otherwise have been buried in sloth, or run to waste.
Dr. Isaac Barrow.

God has sent no greater evil into the world

than that in the sweat of our brow we shall eat our bread; and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls, we shall work out our salvation. But see how in the first of these God has outdone His own anger, and defeated the purposes of His wrath, by the inundation of His mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brow is so far from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. It is labour that makes the garlic and the pulse, the sycamore and the cresses, the cheese of the goats, and the butter of the sheep, to be savoury and pleasant as the flesh of the roebuck, or the milk of the kine, the marrow of oxen, or the thighs of birds. If it were not for labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful, nor so useful, so strong, nor so patient, so noble, nor so untempted. And as God has made us so beholden to labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing itself owes to labour many degrees of worth and value. And, therefore, I need not reckon that, besides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for labour; nights to cure the sweat of the day, sleep to ease our watchfulness, rest to alleviate our burdens, and days of religion to procure our rest; and things are so ordered that labour is become a duty, and an act of many virtues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of our rest;

and there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an inactive life; and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time, which yet passes over the active man light as a dream or the feathers of a bird; while the disemployed is a disease, and like a long, sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his country. And, therefore, although in this particular God has been so merciful in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed; and there are myriads of people, good and bad, who do not "eat their bread in the sweat of their brow;" yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the Divine mercy. God did more for us than we did absolutely need; for He has so disposed the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled to it, that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in loving-kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine, and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spiritual interest with the labour of the spirit, seems to most men so intolerable, that rather than pass under it, they quit their hopes of heaven, and pass into the portion of devils. But this (other part) has in it also a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its entire constitution. For if it were not for this, we had

nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men or no man must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man, in order to beatitude, but choice and election; and nothing can ennoble the choice but love; and nothing can exercise the love but difficulty; and nothing can make that difficulty but the contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And, therefore, whenever any of you are tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulancy of temptation, you may be cured, if you will please but to remember and rejoice that you now have something of your own to give to God, something that He will be pleased to accept, something that He has given you, that you may give it Him; for our money and our time, our days of feasting and our days of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, and whatever else can be accounted in the sense of our religion, are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

Lord Bacon.

PRACTICAL HOLINESS.

If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. *John* vii. 17.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. *Matt.* v. 16.

Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. *Matt.* vii. 21.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. *Matt.* vii. 24, 25.

If ye love Me, keep My commandments. *John* xiv. 15.

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. *John* xv. 7, 8.

Either make the tree good, and his fruit good

or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

Matt. xii. 33.

And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren!

For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My mother, and sister, and brother. *Matt.* xii. 49, 50.

Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. *Luke* xiii. 24.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, and covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater,

hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.

Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Eph. iv. 31, 32; v. 1—7.

Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are His. 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20.

Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Heb. xii. 14.

Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them. 2 *Cor.* v. 15.

I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. *Rom.* xii. 1.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Who gave Himself for us, that He might

redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. *Tit.* ii. 11—14.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the

bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Children obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. *Col.* iii.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue[2]; and to virtue knowledge;

And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

[2] i. e. "courage in professing the faith."—*Dr. Hannah.*

And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 *Pet.* i. 5—8.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. 1 *John* iii. 7.

The only knowledge which is of any avail to us is that which teaches us our duty, or assists us in the discharge of it. "The fear of the Lord, and to depart from evil," is the only wisdom which man should aspire after, as his work and business. Our province is virtue and religion, life and manners; the science of improving the temper and making the heart better. Virtue is demonstrably the happiness of man; it consists in good actions, proceeding from a good principle, temper or heart. Overt acts are entirely in our power. What remains is that we learn to "keep our heart;" to govern and regulate our passions, mind, affections; so that we be free from the impotencies of fear, envy, malice, covetousness, ambition; that we may be clear of them, considered as vices seated in the heart, considered as constituting a general wrong temper; from which general wrong frame of mind all the mistaken pursuits, and far the greatest part of the unhappiness, of life proceed. He who should find a rule to assist us in this work would deserve

infinitely better of mankind than all the improvers of other knowledge put together.

Bp. Butler.

The great, the only necessary, business we have to do in this world is to fit and prepare ourselves to live for ever in the presence of God; "to finish the work God has given us to do," that we may receive the reward of good and faithful servants, to enter into our Master's rest.

Sherlock.

This life, throughout the Scripture, is represented as the time of working; as a race, a warfare, a labouring in the vineyard: the other world as a place of recompense, of rewards and punishments. And if there is such a relation between this world and the next, as between fighting and conquering, and receiving the crown, as between running a race and obtaining a prize, as between the work and the reward, then we must fight and conquer, run our race, and finish our work for this world, if we expect the rewards of the next. *Ibid.*

A life of holiness which we live in these bodies is a kind of middle state between earth and heaven; such a man belongs to both worlds; he is united to this world by his body, which is made of earth, and feels the impression of sensible objects, but his heart and affections are in heaven; by faith he contemplates those invisible glories, and feels and relishes the pleasures of a heavenly life; and he who has his conversation

in heaven, while he lives in this body, is ready prepared and fitted to ascend thither when he goes out of it; he passes from earth to heaven through the middle region (if I may so speak) of a holy and divine life. *Ibid.*

When you suppose a man to be a saint, or all devotion, you have raised him as much above all other conditions of life, as a philosopher is above an animal. *Law.*

Happiness is not our end and aim. The Christian's aim is perfection. Every one of the sons of God must have some of that spirit which marked their Master, that holy sadness, that peculiar unrest, that high and lofty melancholy which belongs to a spirit that strives after heights to which it can never attain. On this earth there can be no rest for man. The motto of every Christian is "Forward!" *F. W. Robertson.*

The Gospel brings peace to them alone who obey its precepts.

Is the kingdom of God within you? Let it be seen in the subjugation of every thought, word, and action, to the obedience of Christ.

The way of true devotion must still be understood to be the same humble, secret, unaffected, unaspiring practice of piety as it used to be of old. The cross which Jesus Christ carried for our salvation is still the true emblem of our profession, from our baptism to our departure out of

this life, and is to be borne by us as a daily admonition to patient suffering and self-denial.

Bp. Horne.

The self-denial which is the test of our faith must be daily. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." It consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us. His trial is in that one thing in those several things in which to do his duty is against his nature. In reference to these you must watch and pray; pray continually for God's grace to help you, and watch with fear and trembling lest you fall. It is right, then, to find out for yourself daily self-denial; and this because our Lord bids you take up your cross daily, and because it proves your earnestness, and because by doing so you strengthen your general power of self-mastery, and gain such habitual self-command as will be a ready defence when the season of temptation comes. Rise up then in the morning with the purpose that (please God) the day shall not pass without its self-denial, with self-denial in innocent pleasures and tastes, if none occurs to mortify sin. Let your very rising from your bed be an occasion of self-denial; let your meals be so likewise. Determine to yield to others in things indifferent, to go out of your way in small matters, to inconvenience yourself (so that no direct duty suffers by it) rather than you should not meet with your daily discipline. This is one great end of fasting. Make some sacrifice, do some painful thing, to

bring home to your mind that you do love your Saviour, that you do hate sin, that you have put aside the present world. Let not your words run on; force every one of them into action, and thus cleansing yourself from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfect holiness in the fear of God. *Newman.*

In religious matters there are many habits and views which we bear with in the unformed Christian, but which we account disgraceful and contemptible should they survive that time when a man's character may be supposed to be settled. Love of display is one of these; whether we are vain of our abilities, or our acquirements, or our wealth, or our personal appearance; whether we discover our weakness in talking much, or love of managing, or again in love of dress. Vanity, indeed, and conceit are always disagreeable, because they interfere with the comfort of other persons, and vex them; but besides this, they are in themselves odious when discerned in those who enjoy the full privileges of the Church, and are by profession men in Christ Jesus, odious from their inconsistency with Christian faith and earnestness. *Ibid.*

Our Saviour expects that all who hope to be saved by Him should be eminent for piety and religion toward God, as also for charity and righteousness towards men; that we "shine" as lights in the world. He expects that we do not content ourselves with the bare profession of His religion, nor yet with reading the Scriptures,

hearing sermons, and praying now and then; but that we strive and study to excel the heathen moralists, the Jewish and Christian Pharisees, yea, and our former selves, too, in all true graces and virtue; in humility and meekness, in temperance, in patience, in self-denial, in contempt of the world, in justice, in charity, in heavenly-mindedness, in faith, in praying, in denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and in living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Bp. Beveridge.

We are bound to furnish our minds with needful knowledge of God's will and our duty; we are to bend our unwilling wills to a ready compliance with them; we are to adorn our souls with dispositions suitable to the future state (such as may qualify us for the presence of God, and conversation with the blessed spirits above); it is incumbent upon us to mortify corrupt desires, to restrain inordinate passions, to subdue natural propensities, to extirpate vicious habits; in order to the effecting these things to use all efficient means, earnest prayer, devotion towards God, study of His law, reflection upon our actions, with all such spiritual instruments; the performing such duties as it requires great care and pains, so it needs much time; all this is not *dictum factum*, as soon done as said; a few spare moments will not suffice to accomplish it.

Dr. Isaac Barrow.

Acting, as in this life we necessarily do, through the medium of the body, it is natural

that our animal propensities should acquire daily strength from exercise, while the moral faculties, being less continually called into action, are in danger of losing half their energy from disuse. Virtue and religion, however, if they mean any thing, are the instruments, under the blessed guidance of the Divine Spirit, by which human reason corrects this incessant tendency to deterioration which so strongly characterizes all earthly things. *Bp. Shuttleworth.*

Our Saviour's example was a gentle and steady light; bright, indeed, but not dazzling to the eye; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder; no affected singularity, no supercilious morosity, no frivolous ostentation of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances: nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in His practice; but, on the contrary, His conversation was full of lowliness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, and candid simplicity; apt to invite and allure all men to approach towards it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it. He did not seclude Himself into the constant retirement of the cloister, nor into the farther recesses of a wilderness (as some others have done), but conversed freely and indifferently with all sorts of men, even the most contemptible and odious sort of men, publicans and sinners; like the sun, with impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleasant light and comfortable warmth to all. He used no uncouth austerity in habit or diet; but complied in His

garb with ordinary usage, and sustained His life with such food as casual opportunity did offer; so that His indifference in that kind yielded matter of obloquy against Him from the fond admirers of a humorous preciseness. His devotions (though exceedingly sprightful and fervent) were not usually extended to a tedious or exhausting durance, nor strained with ecstatical transports, charming the natural senses, and overpowering the reason; but calm, steady, and regular, such as persons of honest intention and hearty desire (though not endued with high fancy or stirring passion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent or impetuous, except upon very great reason and extraordinary occasion, when the honour of God, or good of men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the observance of traditional rites and customs (such as were needlessly burdensome, or which contained in them more formal show than real fruit), yet behaved Himself orderly and peaceably, giving due respect to the least institution of God, and complying with the innocent customs of men, thereby pointing out to us the middle way between peevish superstition and boisterous faction, which as always the most honest, so commonly is the most safe and pleasant way to walk in. He delighted not to discourse of sublime mysteries (although His deep wisdom comprehended all), nor of subtile speculations, and intricate questions, such as might amuse and perplex, rather than instruct and profit His hearers, but usually fed them with the most common and useful truths, and

that in the most familiar and intelligible language; not disdaining the use of vulgar sayings and trivial proverbs, when they best served to insinuate His wholesome meaning into their minds. His whole life was spent in the exercise of the most easy and pleasant, and yet most necessary and substantial duties; obedience to God, charity, meekness, humility, patience, and the like; the which, that He might practise with the greatest latitude, and with most advantage for general imitation, He did not addict Himself to any particular way of life, but disentangled Himself from all worldly care and business; choosing the most free, though very mean condition, that He might indifferently instruct by His example persons of all callings, degrees, and capacities, especially the most, that is the poor; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practise the most difficult necessary duties, holiness, contentedness, abstinence from pleasure, contempt of the world, sufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus suited and tempered by Divine wisdom was the life of our blessed Saviour, that all sorts of men might be in an equal capacity to follow Him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or discouraged; but that all might be pleased, delighted, enamoured with the homely majesty and plain beauty thereof. And in effect it so happened that ordinary people (the weakest, but sincerest and most unprejudiced sort of men) were greatly taken with, most admired and applauded His deportment; many of them readily embracing His doctrine, and devoting themselves to His discipline; while

only the proud, envious, covetous, and ambitious scribes and lawyers rejected His excellent doctrines, and scorned the heavenly simplicity and holy integrity of His life. *Dr. Isaac Barrow.*

Let us suppose a creature perfect according to his created nature; let his form be human, and his capacities no more than equal to the chief of men: goodness shall be his proper character with wisdom to direct it, and power within some certain sphere of action to exert it; but goodness must be the simple actuating principle within him; this being the moral quality which is amiable, or the immediate object of love as distinct from other affections of approbation. Here, then, is a finite object of our mind to tend towards, to exercise itself upon,—a creature, perfect according to his capacity, fixed, steady, equally unmoved by weak pity, or weaker fury and resentment; forming the justest scheme of conduct, going on undisturbed in the execution of it, through the several methods of severity and reward towards his end, namely, the general happiness of all with whom he has to do, as in itself right and valuable.

Bp. Butler.

Christianity would have all men to be temperate, sober, pure, industrious, meek, peaceable, just, and loving; in which case paradise would spring up again amongst us, and earth would be a lively image of heaven. In one word, were it perfectly obeyed, it would establish the happiness that is attainable here below; and to it,

mperfectly as it is practised, are owing the quietness, security, and good order that a great part of the world now enjoys. *Bp. Horne.*

Strive to perform all the common duties of life so as to let your light shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven. Try to let every man who is familiar with your life say, "How high are the principles which regulate this servant of God; and what a blessing such a person is to every one connected with him!" *Bp. Short.*

The whole end of Christianity is to influence the heart and actions. *Bp. Butler.*

The wise improvement of our present time does not confine us always upon our knees, or doing something which has a direct and immediate aspect upon God and another world; for the state of this world will not admit of that. But he employs his time well who divides it amongst all the affairs and offices of life, between this world and the next; who begins and ends the day with adoring his Maker and Redeemer, blessing Him for all His mercies, both temporal and spiritual, begging the pardon of all his sins, the protection of His providence, the assistance of His grace; and then minds his secular affairs with justice and righteousness, eats and drinks with sobriety and temperance, does all good offices for men as occasion serves, and if he has any spare time, improves it for the increase of his knowledge, by reading and meditating upon the

Holy Scriptures, or other useful books; or refreshes himself with the innocent and cheerful conversation of his friends, or other such diversions as are not so much a loss or expense of time, as a necessary relaxation of the mind to recruit our spirits, and to make us more fit either for business or devotion. But then on days set apart for the more public and solemn acts of worship, religion is his chief employment; for that is the proper work of the day, to worship God, and to examine the state of his own soul, to learn his duty more perfectly, and to affect his mind with such a powerful sense of God and another world, as may arm him against all temptations when he returns to the world. This is to improve our present time, to observe the proper times and seasons of action, and to do what is fit and proper for such seasons; never to do any thing which is evil; and as for the several kinds of good actions, to do what particular times and seasons require. Thus we may give a good account of our whole time, even of our most free and vacant hours, which it becomes us to do, though we were certain to live many years, but does more nearly concern us when our time is so uncertain in this life. *Sherlock.*

A life of undissembled holiness, and heavenliness, and self-denial, and meekness, and love, is a powerful sermon, which if you are constantly preaching before those who are near you, will hardly miss of a good effect. Works are more palpably significant than words alone. *Bp. Short.*

What the world calls a shabby thing, the Christian should call a sinful thing. The morality of the Gospel is vastly more delicate and sensitive than the nicest principle of what men call honour; it requires us to consult in every thing the glory of God, and is therefore as abhorrent from trick and underhand dealing, as from robbery and extortion. *Melvill.*

The daily round of duty is full of probation and discipline; it trains the will, heart, and conscience. We need not be prophets or apostles. The commonest life may be full of perfection. The duties of home are discipline for the ministries of heaven. A faithful servant has the heart of a son of God. A dutiful child lives in the spirit of adoption. An obedient wife exercises the whole grace of submission. A faithful pastor may labour in the spirit of an apostle; and a soul in wrongs and sufferings may gain a martyr's crown. It is especially the common, unnoticed duties of life which are the safest and most searching tests. They have no ostentation or excitement, but are done from inward force and a principle of duty. Seek God, then, continually in the even obedience of home, and in His presence at the altar, and He will lead you by the path of the sons of God to the peace of His kingdom. *Manning.*

St. Paul in becoming perfect, attained happiness; but his primary aim was not happiness. The "mark" was perfection of character; the "prize" was blessedness. *F. W. Robertson.*

"If in our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice:

"We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbours or our home farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky;

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

"Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present comfort, rapture, ease,
As heaven shall bid them, come and go,
The secret this of rest below.

"Only, O Lord, in Thy dear love
Fit us for perfect rest above,
And help us this, and every day
To live more nearly as we pray."

Christian Year.

If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to Christ; if we are at all sensible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; let us testify it by a zealous care to become like Him; let a lively image of His most righteous and innocent, most holy and pious, most pure and spotless life be ever present to our fancies, so as to

inform our judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purposes, to correct our mistakes, to direct, amend, and sanctify our whole lives. Let us, with incessant diligence of study, meditate upon the best of histories, wherein the tenour of His Divine practice is represented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the most considerable passages thereof, entertaining them with devout passions, impressing them in our memories, and striving to express them in our conversations. Let us endeavour continually to walk in the steps of our Lord, and to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth;" which that we may be able to do, do Thou, O blessed Redeemer, draw us, by the cords of Thy love; draw us, by the sense of Thy goodness; draw us, by the incomparable worth and excellency of Thy person; draw us by the unspotted purity and excellency of Thy example; draw us, by the merit of Thy precious death, and by the power of Thy Holy Spirit; draw us, good Lord, and we shall run after Thee. *Dr. Isaac Barrow.*

THE END.

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